



Developing Compassionate Workplaces in Europe for the digital and green work environment to protect employees' mental and physical health and wellbeing

Deliverable no. D2.3 Report on training of facilitators

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Part of WP 2: Development and developmental evaluation of a tailored Compassionate Workplace program

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Report

EU-CoWork Facilitator Course

Introduction to the document

This report provides an overview of the Facilitator Course conducted as part of the EU-CoWork project. The training, which took place over three days in December 2024, aimed to equip participants with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively facilitate the development of Compassionate Workplace Programs at the participating organizations.

In this document, we outline the schedule of the training sessions, including the educational goals for each day. Additionally, we provide a brief report on the content and outcomes of the training sessions, reflecting on the key learning points. This report serves as a comprehensive summary of the training event.

1 General description of the facilitator Course

For whom: all appointed facilitators and evaluators responsible for workplace contact in each intervention country for the compassionate workplace program development process in the four intervention countries followed the training and will participate in the Community of Practice meetings. Training was offered by internal consortium partners (in cases in which relevant expertise existed) and external subcontractors (where specific external expertise was needed).

Participants including Faculty:

All the appointed facilitators (n=5) and evaluators (n=4) participated to the training, in addition to representatives from the coordination team.

Team Austria: Carina Batek-Stipacek (facilitator), Kristina Kriemer (PhD student, evaluator)

Team Belgium: Hanne Bakelants (PhD, evaluator, VUB), Elke Velle (facilitator IDEWE) and Lindsay Degneffe (day 1 and day 3 only, facilitator IDEWE), Ellen Delvaux (IDEWE), Deborah De Moortel (PhD, EU-CoWork Coordinator, VUB) and Joachim Cohen (PhD, EU-CoWork Coordinator, VUB, day 1 only), Leen Van Brussel (valorization coordinator, VUB)

Team Greece: Kyveli Papaioannou (facilitator), Efifili Hatzopoulou (evaluator)

Team Sweden: Malin Eneslätt (PhD, facilitator, LTU); Linnea Öman Olsson (PhD student, evaluator, LTU); Carol Tishelman (VUB, coordinating group and Team Sweden, KI)

External Faculty: **Max Kleijberg** (experience designer, PhD, Public Health and Palliative Care evaluator with experience of facilitating co-design processes in End-of-Life (EoL) situations, Karolinska Institutet), **Caroline Gibb** and **Rebecca Patterson**, Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care

When: 2-4 December 2024

Where: Venue “Creative Connect Centre”, IDEWE Leuven, Belgium

Overarching Plan: This course spanned 2.5 days and in general aimed to provide participants with the opportunity to learn and reflect on their roles in country teams as facilitators and evaluators working in direct contact with the recruited workplaces. In addition to developing skills, as well as preparation for and familiarity with roles and the uncertainty inherent in working with participatory research and developmental evaluation, this course provided a strong basis for forming a Community of Practice among participants.

2 Course schedule, content and learning objectives

An overview, including brief notes, of the training is provided below. The 1st day focused on the facilitators and evaluators themselves, engaging with issues related to serious disease, dying, death, loss and care. The 2nd day focused on the roles of the facilitators and evaluators within the project, aiming to provide time for reflection as well as increase skills and provide a repertoire of tools. The final day focused on the facilitators and evaluators as a new community of practice to be developed, and strengthening a sense of preparedness and self-efficacy in entering the next project phase of engaging directly with workplaces.

Day 1: Facilitators and evaluators engaging with issues relating to death, dying, loss and care

All sessions led by Caroline Gibb and Max Kleijberg

Learning objectives

Participants will:

- Have examined and reflected upon one's own perspective / relationship to EoL issues, including compassion;
- Better understand challenges that they personally may face in facilitator roles;
- Will better understand some of their strengths and weaknesses that may affect their role as facilitator;
- Consider who you are in relation to the workplace you will be in contact with ;
- Discuss expectations of your role, what you might encounter and what can be accomplished;
- Be more confident engaging with others on issues relating to death, dying, loss and care;
- Have an awareness of how different styles of engagement/types of activities can affect people's potential willingness to engage;
- Be more 'comfortable with the uncomfortable' – understand how a facilitator can hold space for people sharing difficult or upsetting experiences;
- Have an awareness of common concerns, stigmas and reactions people may have relating to death, dying, loss and care;
- Have some practical techniques to support facilitation of potentially challenging discussions.

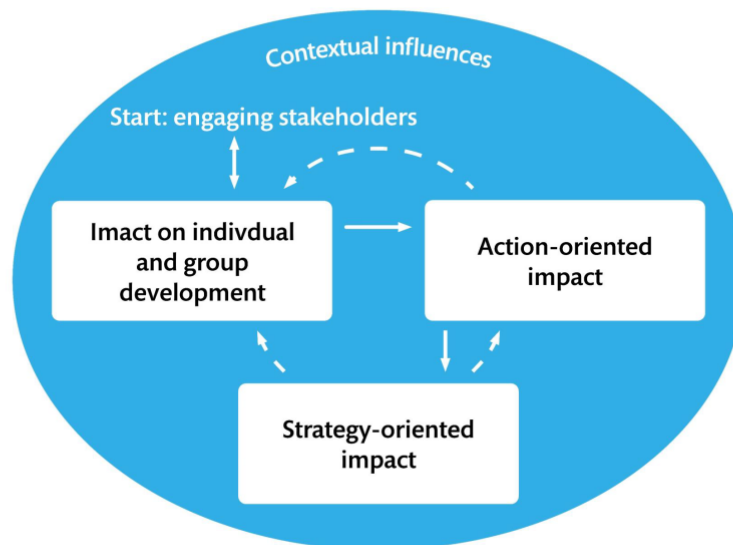
Day 1 Introductory session (9.00 - 9.30) Joachim Cohen, Caroline Gibb, Max Kleijberg

- Overview of the course
- Introductions of all participants (distribution of name labels)
- Safe space agreement
- Expectations assignment: write 3 expectations and three hopes for the training course on post-its. Quick sharing and posted for view
 - Training facilitators checked course against these expectations throughout the 3 days

Day 1 Morning Session – part 1 (9.30 – 11.00) – Engaging dying, death, loss and care yourself (Max Kleijberg (MK) and Caroline Gibb (CG))

- Theory to frame Part 1 (MK)
 - Impact model introduction (based on Kleijberg et al 2022)

Model for impact development in a participatory PHPC process



Max Kleijberg

Kleijberg, 2022

- Mini Death Café (CG)
 - Introduction to different ways to get more comfortable talking about death, dying and bereavement
 - Using the conversation menu in small groups
 - Participating as a person rather than/as well as a professional
 - Sharing experiences in full group
 - Personal reflections
 - Reflections on using the menu as a tool: What works? What is missing? What is your take away?

BREAK 11.00-11.15

Day 1 Morning Session – part 2 (11.15 – 12.15) – Engaging with others about death, dying, loss and care (our own role and position in relation to the workplace) Max Kleijberg and Caroline Gibb

- Strengths and concerns: quick post-it exercise (CG)
- Who are you in relation to the people and workplace you are engaging with? (MK)
 - Power Dynamics (based on Gaventa and Cornwall 2015; Kleijberg et al 2019)
 - Power Over
 - Group discussion: How are power dynamics established
 - Formally/explicitly through hierarchies
 - Informally/implicitly through privilege and marginalization
 - Power dynamics within the project
 - Power to Act: having a social and professional mandate to action
 - Power to Act in Concert with Others: A relational view of power as negotiated through human interaction
 - Magic circles (from play theory)
 - Discussion on how facilitators might be perceived by the workplace, discussion of roles (MK and CG)
 - Creating inclusive and welcoming spaces to engage others in dying, death, loss and care (CG)
 - Holding an open and safe space for a diverse group
 - Considering ourselves within that
 - Unconscious bias and our assumptions
 - Considering the participant journey and potential barriers, and what this means in the context of sensitive discussions and topics

LUNCH AT IDEWE

Day 1 Afternoon Session – part 1 (13.15 – 14.45) - Engaging others in death, dying, loss and care: Facilitation tools and skills

- Challenging scenarios (small group discussions)
 - Potential scenarios
 - What would you do?
 - What tools can you use?
- Self-care: the importance of looking after yourself (CG)
 - Self-care jar activity

Day 1 Closing Check out (14.45--15.00) - Looking after ourselves, questions, and reflection

- What are your take-aways from today?
- How are you feeling?
- How will you look after yourself?

18.30 JOINT DINNER

Day 2: The Facilitator in the Project

Day 2 Check-in (9.00 - 9.15) – Reflections on the previous day

Issues that arose:

- Importance of distinguishing between therapy and facilitation
- Need to discuss among facilitators with similar roles, in small groups
- Need for different use of resources and timelines depending on the size of each country's team
- Need to consider balance between expectations from each work organization and what the team is able to deliver.

Day 2 Morning Session – part 1 (9.15 – 10.30) - What will the facilitator do? (Deborah De Moortel (DDM))

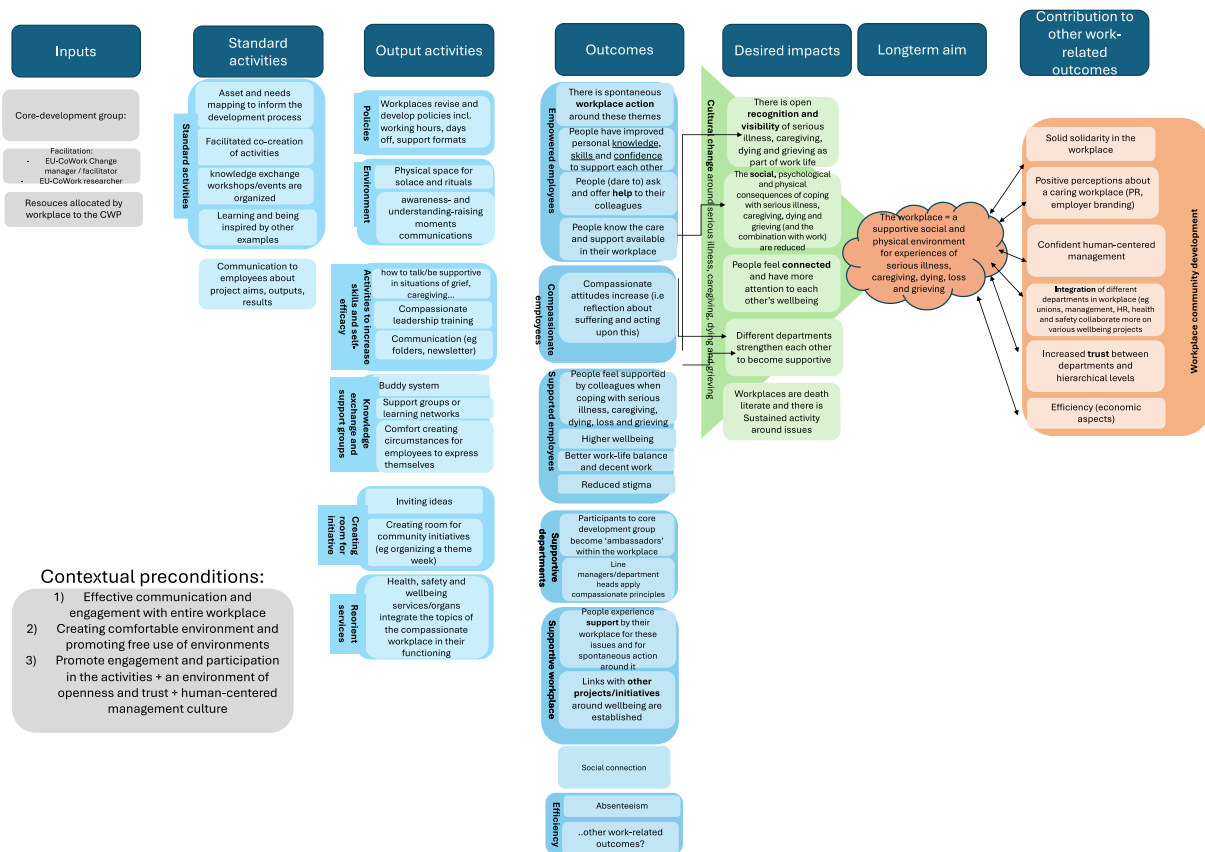
Focus on the different stages of the co-development and the role of the facilitator in this process, also in relation to the principal evaluator and the core development group.

Learning objectives

Participants will:

- Be familiar with the core concepts (including theory of change), and expected activities and stages in the project, with focus on workplace co-creative processes and the facilitator role
- Feel comfortable and familiar with steps to take in working with each organization to create a core development group
- Share their considerations, plans to date about how to work together, share their concerns and questions

This session began with an initial overview by DDM, followed by discussion and presentation by each country team of facilitator/evaluator about their thoughts and plans to date. This session concluded with a quick refresher of EU CoWork's logic model, seen below.



Day 2 Morning Session – part 2 (10.45 – 12.15) - Resources for inspiration – facilitation (Elke Velle)

Focus on tools and tips for facilitation, both within the core development team and within the whole organization.

Learning objectives

Participants will:

- Know how to prepare for a meeting or workshop
- Know what a group needs to collaborate
- Know how to reach the group's goals
- Be familiar with strategies for inclusivity
- Be aware of potential challenges and approaches for dealing with resistance to change
- Be aware of different ways in which materials and techniques can be used
- Have discussed strengths and limitations in the various materials and techniques

LUNCH AT IDEWE

Day 2 Afternoon session – part 1 (13.15 – 14.45) - Resources for inspiration – co-creation (Ellen Delvaux)

Learning objectives

Participants will:

- Have a good overview of the methods of co-creation that can be used (including intakes, assets & needs mapping, development of CWP's)
- Have “experienced” some of the methods
- Develop a repertoire of approaches for co-creation and working with the core development group and other stakeholders
- Be aware of different ways in which materials and techniques can be used
- Have discussed strengths and limitations in the various materials and techniques

In addition to a background on ideas underlying facilitation, this section focused on methodologies for co-creation, linking to tools and techniques made available to the facilitators and evaluators.

Day 2 Afternoon session – part 2 (15.00 – 16.30) - Resources for inspiration - critically appraising our website resources (Rebecca Patterson)

Learning objectives

Participants will:

- Understand the process and intentions behind the creation of the inspiration materials website
- Become more familiar with the materials on the website
- Have thought about how/if the inspirational material might be used in their own context
- Have discussed strengths and limitations in the various materials and techniques
- Have thought about how they might adapt/use/grow the inspirational materials in future

This session began with a presentation of the Double Diamond, a model from Human Design Thinking, positioned in relation to Developmental Evaluation. It continued with a review of co-creative techniques, tools and skills presented at the first EU CoWork consortium meeting (March 2024, Luleå) and new insights into approaches that can be applied.

Day 2 Closing (16.30 – 16.45) - Questions, reflection and looking after ourselves

Day 3: Developing a Community of Practice

Day 3 Morning Session Check-in and Reflections about Days 1 and 2 (9.00-9-15) Carol Tishelman

This session was shortened, with a decision to further discuss any issues in the final afternoon session.

Community of Practice: Learning objectives

Participants will:

- Be familiar with what is meant by Community of Practice in EU-CoWork
- Have considered what they wish for through a Community of Practice, in terms of ambitions, how these ambitions can be met
- Have determined a plan of action for the Community of Practice

Day 3 Morning Session (9.15 – 9.30) Community of Practice: Background and theory (Carol Tishelman)

Communities of Practice are created over time through a shared domain of interest, and support relationship-building through common activities, discussions and shared practice. Our communities of practice for evaluators and facilitators working directly within and across work environments and countries will evolve through experiential learning, knowledge exchange and the process of developing and using tailored CWP.

Core features of CoPs are defined in the literature as including mutual engagement, joint enterprise with a common purpose, and a shared repertoire with resources created over time. While evaluation research on CoPs remains limited, CoPs have been studied in a variety of sectors, and are argued to enable organizational change, with use of a facilitator to enhance interaction, attention to communication, and uptake of knowledge promoted by organizational infrastructure, which are some of the effective features in such change processes. Activities of a CoP might include: joint problem solving, information sharing, sharing of experiences, sharing common assets, discussing project developments, joint documentation projects, mapping knowledge and identifying gaps, and spreading best practices.

Day 3 Morning Session (9.30-10.45) Community of Practice (Caroline Gibb)

In this session, we mapped the needs of the facilitators regarding this Community of Practice and determined how to move forward to develop our CoP, including practical arrangements.

Participants' wish list for CoP

Discuss challenges
Get feedback
New ideas and practices
Share knowledge
Commitment
Fun
Self-compassion
Space to vent
Joint problem understanding
Build resilience
Safe space
Room and time to reflect
Emotional support
Quick communication

Practical, logistic matters and questions to be resolved

- Initial meeting face-to-face: In Leuven, at training course
- Initial suggestion was to hold quarterly meetings online—response was more often initially, e.g. monthly for first 6-9 months? 90 minutes long. First meeting during second half of January 2025.
- Should there be some separate meetings for facilitators and for evaluators? Or risk for silos and unnatural role division?
- Asynchronous communication? Other forms for communication than direct meetings? Forms for communication between meetings
- Open to all meeting: online, end of year 1?
- Caroline responsible for calling and planning meetings, will send out way to try to find time that works for everyone.
 - What platform will work for contact between meetings? Start with Teams, despite the issues outside one organization.
 - Slack?
- First meeting will include a safe space agreement, adaptation for each iteration, since it will change depending on who attends (if anyone beyond those with direct workplace contact is invited)

Day 3 Morning Session – part 2 (11.00 – 12.30) – Closing – Summing up, questions and concerns (Deborah De Moortel)

This session allowed us to reflect on what we learned in the past days, and raise questions and concerns we still had regarding the facilitation of the core development group within the organizations we guide.

Questions for discussion

What are you going to take away in your heart?

- The group here, feeling closer, getting to know each other and feeling good of being part of this community, connection here can transferable to working with workplaces
- Good to get to know each other better in country team evaluator-facilitator
- Importance of having a safe space to share
- Warmth, curiosity and excitement
- Sense of support, all swimming in the same sea, feel safe to move on

Do you have a clear vision of the project? Your role?

- Leave behind other roles to take on new ones
- More acceptance of complexity and the unknown
- Some more clarity, especially about role for CoP facilitator

What are you going to take away in your brain?

- Power dynamics

Do you now have practical skills?

- Toolbox and techniques
- Ideas for workshops in fun and relaxed way
- Do you know which steps to take next? Daring and doing
- Need to sit down all together in each country team to make things more concrete
- Practical stuff

Discussion about issues raised by participants throughout the course

- Balance between expectations and what can be provided
 - Importance of initial introductions and formulations of expectations
 - Monitor expectations continually
- Use and prioritization of limited resources
 - Importance of managing expectations, clarify what is realistic
- Reflections about using the techniques shared here

Some photos

Day 1: Session by Max Kleijberg (MK) and Caroline Gibb (CG)





Day 1: Dinner at local spaghetti franchise Bavet



Day 2: Some in-the-moment pictures



Day 3: Session by Caroline Gibb

